

29. (Withdrawn) The surface finish of claim 28, wherein the top coat provides a non-slip surface finish.

30. (Withdrawn) The surface finish of claim 28, wherein the top coat has a coefficient of friction as measured by ASTM D-2047 of at least 0.6.

31. (Withdrawn) The surface finish of claim 28, wherein the top coat is a crosslinked polymer coating.

REMARKS

With the entry of the present amendments, claims 1 through 16 are pending in the application. Claims 17-31 have been withdrawn. Claims 1 and 11 have been amended. Support for the amendments in the claims may be found throughout the specification as filed.

In view of the following remarks, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections to the application in the Office Action is respectfully requested.

ELECTIONS/RESTRICTION

In the Office Action, the Examiner required that Applicants affirm the provisional election that had previously been made to prosecute the invention of Group I (claims 1-16) without traverse. In accordance with the Examiner's requirement, Applicants hereby affirm the election to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1 through 16 without traverse. All of the inventors as originally listed in the application are inventors as relate to claims 1 through 16. No modification is necessary.

REJECTION OF CLAIMS UNDER 35 USC §102(b) AND 103(a)

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 3-4, 5-8, 10-12, 14 and 16 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Heddon as evidenced by Suiter and *Hawley's Condensed Chemical Dictionary*. The Examiner further rejected claims 1-2, 6-7, 9, 11 and 14 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Helf. The Examiner also rejected claim 9 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Heddon in view of Suiter and as evidenced by *Hawley's Condensed Chemical Dictionary*. Further, the Examiner rejected claims 13 and 15 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Heddon as evidenced by Suiter and *Hawley's Condensed Chemical Dictionary* and in view of Kumar, et al. Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's assessment regarding the patentability of the rejected claims in view of Heddon, et al., Suiter, Helf, Kumar, et al., or *Hawley's Condensed Chemical Dictionary* alone or in combination.

The currently pending claims are directed to a surface finish comprising a flexible film at least partially covering a surface and a cured coating disposed over at least a portion of the film. Cured coatings are described in the specification as coatings that are formed by the evaporation of a solvent and the coalescence of the solid film without crosslinking (i.e., "evaporatively-cured" coatings) and coatings that are formed by crosslinking reactions. The flexible film can be removed from the surface by peeling without the use of stripping agents. Further, the surface finish exhibits a coefficient of friction as measured by ASTM D-2047 of at least 0.6.

The Heddon reference is directed to a bowling lane and method for constructing the same. The bowling lane includes a plurality of synthetic panels having a tab and a notch cut formed along the side surface. The synthetic panels are attached to a bowling lane substructure

with screws. Flat dowels are placed over the screws to provide a smooth bowling lane surface. Panels are juxtaposed so that the tab of one panel fits into the notch of another panel. One side of a plastic film is attached to the juxtaposed panel with a contact adhesive. A finishing coat or lane finish material is applied to the other side of the film to provide a sliding surface. Examples of lane finishes include HONOR ROLL, U300, a top coat of urethane with a slip agent such as silicone glyceride or epoxies with good plastic film adhesive characteristics." (Column 6, lines 29-35.

The film functions as a barrier layer between the finish coat and the panel's top surface so that the bowling lane may be refinished by the peeling of the film from the lane. Once the film barrier 32 has been removed, the adhesive 34 may easily be cleaned from the surface with known adhesive removing solvents. The thickness of the film, as referred to by reference to the Suiter patents, is from 3 to 20 mils.

The Suiter reference was relied on by the Examiner for its teaching of film thicknesses of 3 to 20 mils and as identified by the Examiner for 3 to 10 mils for most of the bowling lane surfaces. Further, the Suiter reference requires utilization of "an appropriate solvent if patches of adhesive are stuck to the wood." See column 4, lines 26-28. *Hawley's Condensed Chemical Dictionary* was relied on by the Examiner for its teaching of some curable coatings. Clearly, the present invention is not anticipated by the Heddon reference as evidenced by Suiter and *Hawley's Condensed Chemical Dictionary*. The Heddon and Suiter references as applied refer to bowling lanes. An analysis of the US Bowling Congress Website provides the accepted specifications for a bowling lane. (A copy of the relevant portions of which are enclosed and highlighted and marked for ease of reference.) According to these specifications, the coefficient of friction shall not exceed .29. (emphasis added.) This clearly differs from the

present invention which requires a coefficient of friction of at least 0.6. Further, contrary to the Examiner's position, the Heddon reference requires the use of stripping agents along with peeling to remove the film and finish coat components. At column 6, lines 50-52, Heddon indicates that "once the film barrier 32 has been removed, the adhesive 34 may easily be removed from the surface with known adhesive removing solvents." (emphasis added). Clearly, this requires the use of some type of stripper/solvent for complete removal of the film components. This is contrary to the present invention which is removable from the surface by peeling without the use of stripping agents. The Suiter reference provides no assistance in overcoming this deficiency of Heddon in that Suiter also requires utilization of "an appropriate solvent" for adhesive stuck to the wood. See column 4, lines 26-28. Thus, the present invention is neither anticipated or rendered obvious by Heddon, Suiter or *Hawley's Condensed Chemical Dictionary* alone or in combination.

With regard to the Examiner's rejections based on Helf, Helf does not teach or anticipate the present invention. Helf is directed to an indicia containing surface coating composite for application to a substrate such as a floor. The composite comprises a layer of indicia having a layer of pressure sensitive adhesive on one side thereof. The pressure sensitive adhesive layer secures the indicia to the floor. To remove the polymeric layer 18 of the Helf reference, one would use "any one of a wide variety of commercially available base-containing solutions." See column 7, lines 4-10. For example, one might choose to apply an aqueous ammonia solution on the surface of the polymeric layer in an amount sufficient to dissolve the polymeric layer. Thus, a stripping agent is required to remove the composite of the Helf patent.

Conversely, the present invention does not require the use of stripping agents to remove the inventive surface finish. Rather, the surface finish including the film are removed by peeling. Utilization of additional stripping composition is not required by the present invention.

With regard to the §103(a) rejection based on Heddon in view of Suiter and as evidenced by *Hawley's Condensed Chemical Dictionary*, or alternatively, Heddon as evidenced by Suiter and *Hawley's Condensed Chemical Dictionary* and in view of Kumar, et al., as previously indicated, the present invention is neither taught, suggested, or rendered obvious by the references. As previously discussed, both the Heddon and Suiter patents are directed to bowling alley or lane surfaces which would require a slip coefficient of friction of no more than .29. Additionally, the Suiter and Heddon references require the use of a solvent or other "stripping agent" to remove the disclosed composite. The *Hawley* reference is directed to some curable coatings.

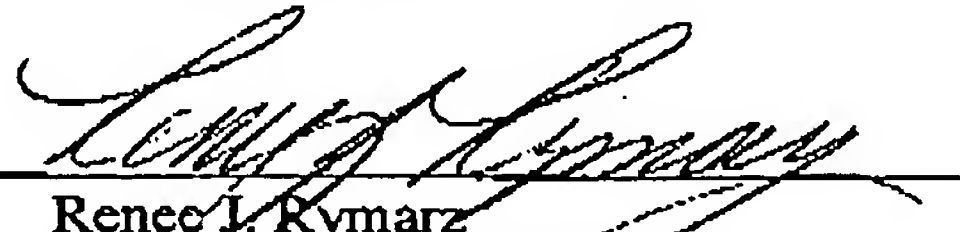
The Kumar, et al. reference is directed to a fast drying ambient temperature curable coating composition comprising epoxy resin. The coatings may be baked at high temperature to accelerate the cure rate. The coatings may be useful on bowling alley lanes and have improved solvent resistance. However, as is previously discussed for use on bowling lanes, the coefficient of friction of all lane surfaces should not exceed .29 according to the USBC regulations.

Conversely, the present invention is directed to a surface finish which among other things requires that the slip coefficient of friction be at least 0.6. Further, no stripping agent is required to remove the surface finish. Rather, peeling is the only means of removing the surface finish and the attendant coating attached thereto. Clearly, the present invention is in no way taught, suggested, or rendered obvious by Heddon, Suiter, *Hawley's Condensed Chemical Dictionary* or Kumar, et al. alone or in combination.

In view of the foregoing remarks, and the enclosed amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the claims remaining in the application are in condition for allowance and favorable action thereon is respectfully requested. If Examiner Bissett has any questions, or believes a telephone discussion would expedite prosecution, Examiner Bissett is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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A regulation bowling lane, including flat gutters, kickbacks and approach, must be constructed of wood and/or other materials which have been tested according to USBC procedures for the specified time period and approved.

Note: For areas beyond the pin deck not covered in the USBC Bowling Equipment Specifications Manual, standard installation procedures are acceptable unless, upon inspection, it is deemed that an area in question may affect specifications and/or scoring. In these instances the USBC Equipment Specifications Department should be contacted.

Synthetic Products:

All non-wood material used in the manufacturing of lane components must be presented to USBC for evaluation and possible testing before use in sanctioned competition. If approved, they may not be altered by the use of coatings, etc. unless these coatings have been presented to USBC for evaluation and possible testing. In addition, all products must contain an approval label with the following requirements:

1. The label must be permanent, lasting the life of the product.
2. The label must be clearly visible after the product is installed in the bowling center.
3. The label must identify the company as the manufacturer.
4. The label must contain an approval number assigned by USBC and state "USBC Approved."

Approach:

Extending from and exclusive of the foul line there shall be an unobstructed level approach which shall be:

1. Not less than 15 feet in length
2. Free from depressions exceeding 1/4 inch.
3. Not less than the width of the lane.

Foul Line:

The foul line shall be:

- 1 Not less than 3/8 inch nor more than 1 inch in width.
2. At a minimum, the entire width of the lane.
3. Distinctly marked upon or embedded between the lane and approach.

It may be required that the foul line be plainly marked on the walls, posts, division boards or any point on a line with the regular foul line.

(For more information on the foul line see the section on Automatic Foul Detecting Device.)

REGULATION BOWLING LANE

USBC Regulation Bowling Lane Dimensions

Typical Cross Section of Bowling Lane—Round Gutters from foul line to pin deck area.

*NOTE: This particular measurement is not a USBC specification but is an accepted standard for installing bowling lanes.

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CUSHION

PLANK

*1 3/4"

TAIL PLANK

2" MAX.

THICKNESS

2 1/4" FIBRE PIN SPOTS

*TOUNGE AND GROOVED BED STOCK

TYPICALLY LAID ON EDGE

FOUL LINE $\frac{3}{8}$ " TO 1" WIDE
DIVISION BOARD $2\frac{3}{4}$ " THICK*
GUTTER $1\frac{7}{8}$ " BENEATH SURFACE OF LANE
WHERE FLAT GUTTER BEGINS TO DECLINE
MOULDING $1\frac{1}{2}$ " X $\frac{3}{4}$ " WHERE IT ENTERS THE PIT
MOULDING $\frac{7}{8}$ " X $\frac{3}{4}$ " SLIGHTLY AHEAD OF No. 1 PIN SPOT
CENTER OF 7 & 10 PIN SPOTS TO EDGE OF PIN DECK
 $2\frac{1}{2}$ " - 3" THIS DISTANCE PLUS WIDTH OF GUTTER $12\frac{1}{8}$ "
KICKBACK 17" ABOVE PIN DECK
KICKBACK 24" ABOVE PIN DECK

Composition:

The lane must be constructed entirely of wood and/or synthetic materials which have been approved by USBC.

Length:

1. The overall length of a regulation lane, including the pin deck, has a reference dimension of 62 feet, $10\frac{3}{16}$ inches, measured from the lane side of the foul line to the rear edge of the pin deck (not including the tail plank).
2. It must be 60 feet, plus/minus $\frac{1}{2}$ inch, from the lane side of the foul line to the center of the No. 1 pin spot.
3. It must be $34\frac{3}{16}$ inches, plus/minus $\frac{1}{16}$ inch, from the center of the No. 1 pin spot to the rear edge of the pin deck (not including the tail plank).

Width:

The lane shall be $41\frac{1}{2}$ inches, plus/minus $\frac{1}{2}$ inch, wide.

Surface:

1. The surface must be free of all continuous grooves or ridges.
2. For all initial installations, there shall be no depressions or crowns in excess of $\frac{40}{1000}$ inch on the surface of the lane/panel over a 42 inch span in any direction.

Note-The drop-off between synthetic panels is not considered a depression.

3. There shall be no crosswise tilt in excess of the $\frac{40}{1000}$ inch over the width of the lane.
4. The same lane finish coating shall be applied from the edgeboard to edgeboard.
5. The Coefficient of Friction of all lane surfaces shall not exceed .29 when measured with a USBC approved device.

All bowling lane finish coatings as well as all synthetic lane surfaces must be submitted to USBC for coefficient of friction testing before use in sanctioned competition.

In addition, all lane surface coatings must bear labels stating "This product complies with USBC specifications when applied as directed by the manufacturer."

Lane and Approach Markings or Designs

Lane and approach markings shall only be permitted in

accordance with the following specifications:

1. Measured from the foul line, a maximum of seven (7) guides may be embedded in or stamped on the approach at each of the following points: 2-6 inches; 3-4 feet; 6-7 feet; 9-10 feet; 11-12 feet, and 14-15 feet. Each series of guides shall be parallel to the foul line and each guide shall be circular in shape, and shall not exceed 3/4 inch in diameter.
2. At a point 6-8 feet beyond the foul line and parallel thereto, there may be embedded in or stamped on the lane a maximum of ten (10) guides. Each guide shall be uniform, circular in shape, and shall not exceed 3/4 inch in diameter.
3. At a point 12-16 feet beyond the foul line, there may be embedded in or stamped on the lane a maximum of seven targets. Each of the targets shall be uniform and may consist of one or more dowels, darts, diamond, triangles or rectangular designs. The overall surface covered by each target shall not be more than 1 1/4 inches in width and 6 inches in length. Each target must be equidistant from one another and set in a uniform pattern.
4. At a point 33-44 feet beyond the foul line, there may be a maximum of four targets. Each target must be uniform in appearance and shall not be wider than a single board nor longer than 36 inches.
5. Embedded markings or designs shall be of wood, fibre or plastic, and shall be flush and level with the surface of the lanes and approaches.
6. When the markings are stamped on wood lanes, they shall be applied to the bare wood and then covered with lacquer, urethane, or similar liquid transparent material generally used in resurfacing. All such installations in any one center shall be uniform as to design and measurement and at least on natural pairs of lanes.
7. Glow/Cosmic bowling may only be sanctioned on lanes that meet all of the specifications under Lane and Approach Markings or Designs.

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USBC Regulation Bowling Lane Dimensions

*NOTE: This particular measurement is not a USBC specification but is an accepted standard for installing bowling lanes.

All synthetic bowling lanes must be USBC approved and meet all specifications for regulation bowling lanes in addition to the following:

Identification:

On synthetic lane surfaces, each panel must have at least one label that meets the following requirements:

1. The label, identifying the manufacturer, must be permanent, lasting the life of the product, and clearly visible after it is installed.
2. The label must contain an approval number assigned by USBC and state "USBC Approved."
3. The color of the label can be similar to the colors

used in the pattern, as long as they are visible upon inspection.

4. The label must be located on the 5 board, on the 7-pin side of the lane.

5. The size of the label shall be limited to the width of the board (approximately 11/16 inches) and shall not exceed 2 inches in length.

Gaps and Drop Off:

On synthetic lane surfaces, either panelized or overlay, where two panels meet, the following specifications must be met:

1. The leading edge of one panel shall be flush with, or not more than 40/1000 inch below the trailing edge of the adjoining panel at any point across the width of the lane.

2. The leading edge of the first panel shall be flush with, or not more than 60/1000 inch below the trailing edge of the foul line at any point across the width of the lane.

3. The gap between the leading and trailing edge of adjoining panels, across the width of the lane, shall not exceed 50/1000 inch at the time of installation.

(See the following diagram for description of "leading" and "trailing" edges.)

Surface:

The surface of a synthetic lane may not be altered (coated) with any material unless first tested and approved.

SYNTHETIC BOWLING LANE

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Foul

line

Trailing

Edge Pin Deck

.040"

Drop

.050"

Maximum

Gap

Leading

Edge

Trailing

Edge

Trailing

Edge

Trailing

Edge

Trailing

Edge

Trailing

Edge

"A" "B"

Leading

Edge

Leading

Edge

Leading

Edge

Leading

Edge
Leading
Edge